

NETWORK



Tempe
Community
Council

A publication of Tempe Community Council.
Connecting those in need with those who care.

SUMMER 2005

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Event Spotlight:

"The Don Carlos Humanitarian Awards"
Coming soon...



The 2004 Hayden Youth Award Recipient Carly Keller along with the Don Carlos Humanitarian of the Year Joe Spracale.

Tempe's prestigious Don Carlos Humanitarian Award will be presented on Wednesday, November 2nd at the Arizona Historical Society Museum. read more on page 6...

Housing: Fulfilling One of Life's Basic Needs



Having a roof over one's head is a basic human need. Beyond the obvious benefit of shelter from the elements and having a comfortable place in which to eat and sleep, safe, stable and affordable housing has been linked to a myriad of social benefits.

As an oft-cited element of the proverbial "American Dream", homeownership is clearly what most individuals and families strive toward and what municipalities hope for to create safe, stable neighborhoods. Housing prices have skyrocketed in many communities throughout the nation, increasing at a much greater rate than incomes. Moderate and lower-income families are finding it increasingly difficult to afford to purchase a home.

The problem isn't getting any better. In 1999, a TCC Network special report on "Affordable Housing" cited the then median resale home price of \$117,939. The current median Tempe resale price is \$206,425, a 75% increase.

A recent *Arizona Republic* article, headlined *Arizona Leads Nation in Housing Price Rise (June 3, 2005)* reported that while the price of an average U.S. home increased 12.5 percent from the first quarter of 2004, Arizona's average home price increased 19.4 percent during that same period.

Because supply is limited, the market for single-family homes in Tempe is not likely to cool anytime soon. With a number of high-rise condo projects currently in the works, Tempe's housing supply will increase significantly, but these units will be far from affordable and will not likely house the teachers, public safety, service workers and others

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who make up the fabric of our community. Additionally, investors have driven up the price of homes in Tempe by out-bidding prospective buyers, often paying prices significantly above the asking price.

What constitutes affordable?

Housing Affordability is a relative term, based on income. Clearly, a one million dollar home is affordable to some, but is well out of reach for the vast majority of us. Additionally, affordability is subjective and often based on individual priorities. People with similar incomes often have very different ideas of what they are able to afford, whether it be clothing, entertainment or housing.

However, the federal government has created a definition of affordability to take some of the fuzziness out of the equation. According to the federal government, a family is considered “cost burdened” if more than 30 percent of its gross household income goes toward housing costs. This standard is used regardless of whether one is a home-owner or a renter.

Affordability Gap

The housing affordability gap is the difference between actual home sale prices and rents and the price that families can reasonably afford, generally using the 30 percent of gross income standard. The following affordability gap was determined by the Affordable Housing Profile for Tempe:

Total Households	GAP Households	% of Total Households
63,602	9,436	14.8%

What should be done?

In 2003, the City of Tempe published *Housing a Community, A Planning Document to Increase and Preserve Affordable Housing in Tempe*. The recommendations included in this document are summarized here.

City of Tempe Housing Policy

“Increase the amount of financial and/or technical resources available for the creation and/or preservation of affordable housing opportunities...

Develop technical assistance plans for community development corporations to help maximize their production...

Allocate an appropriate amount of funding annually for non-profit capacity building and administrative support...

Preserve and maintain the existing affordable housing stock...

Invest in housing development that allows for maximum long-term affordability...

Target homeowner rehabilitation in aging neighborhoods...

Continue supporting homeownership programs, such as the community land trust model, that ensure long-term affordability...

Increase the homeownership rate in Tempe with an emphasis on creating opportunities for the moderate-income population...

Solidify partnerships with non-profit organizations providing homebuyer education and counseling services...

Ensure entries at all levels of the housing continuum with opportunities to advance along the continuum as appropriate...

Explore the use of Individual Development Accounts (IDA's)...

Develop a case-management system for individuals/families with homeownership being the ultimate goal...”

Programs to encourage homeownership

The City of Tempe offers down payment assistance programs for first-time homebuyers.

Through the American Dream Downpayment Initiative (ADDI), zero interest deferred loans up to \$10,000 are available to qualifying, first-time homebuyers in Tempe. To qualify, applicants must have a household income at or below 60 percent of the area median income and complete a City of Tempe-approved homebuyer education course.

Tempe also offers a down payment assistance program for Section 8 participants. This program

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allows participants in the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program to have the option of purchasing a home with their Section 8 assistance instead of renting.

NewTown CDC is a nonprofit dedicated to community building through encouraging and facilitating homeownership and asset development. They administer the following programs to create and sustain affordable housing and personal asset development in Tempe:

The Community Land Trust of Tempe

The Community Land Trust (CLT) is currently administered by NewTown, but began with the direction and support of TCC. The CLT helps maintain long-term affordable housing by keeping the land out of the inflationary spiral. While the house itself is privately owned and may be bought and sold for a profit, the land is held in trust and its long-term use is ensured through a lease-agreement. The Land Trust offers leaseholders security, an opportunity to transfer the lease to their heirs and full rights of privacy.

First Time Homebuyer Program

NewTown also provides prospective first time homebuyers with a homeownership coach to provide credit counseling, help with money management, individual development accounts, referrals for affordable loan opportunities, down payment assistance programs and other resources.

The Rental Alternative

Although homeownership may be the ideal to strive toward, the reality is that it does require a certain amount of accumulated wealth—for the down payment, monthly mortgage, property taxes and upkeep. For many, this dream is out of reach, and renting may be the only realistic option.

In Tempe, an extremely low income household (earning \$17,490, 30% of the Area Median Income of \$58,300) can afford monthly rent of no more than \$437, while the Fair Market Rent for a two bedroom unit is \$817. A minimum wage earner (earning \$5.15 per hour) can afford monthly rent of only \$268. With incomes as low as they are for various service level jobs, employment is no guarantee of being able to afford one of life's basic needs.

The Tempe Housing Services Division administers Section 8 Rental Assistance, a federal program funded by HUD. Through this program, eligible very low income families receive a rent subsidy in an amount equal to the payment standard (established by the City) minus the family's total tenant payment. While Tempe is funded to assist 1,068 families, the need still far exceeds the available resources. Waiting lists for all Valley Section 8 Rental Assistance vouchers are notoriously long.

The problem of housing affordability in Tempe will likely continue to get worse, not better. Many strategies currently exist to alleviate the problem. Although several have been implemented, if Tempe is committed to maintaining an economically diverse citizen base, this issue will remain one of significant importance as our community continues to develop and evolve.

For additional information about affordable housing programs, contact: City of Tempe Housing Services at (480) 350-8960 or www.tempe.gov/tdsi/housing or NewTown CDC at (480) 517-1589 or newtowncdc.org.

BOTTOM LINE

In many ways, Tempe is in a very fortunate position. The fact that Tempe is land-locked allows policy-makers to direct resources toward quality of life amenities, rather than additional infrastructure for expanded development. However, this limit to the housing stock, along with proximity to ASU, increases home prices and makes Tempe a prime location for investors who don't necessarily have strong ties to the community. Encouraging home-ownership for those who work here and are therefore truly invested in our community makes a great deal of sense to ensure the continued health and stability of Tempe.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



What are our collective community priorities? This is a question we should ask periodically. Although we are a diverse community, most of us chose to live here for particular reasons. Those reasons are probably varied and might include quality schools, housing, proximity to ASU, work, friends or family. Those reasons probably also include intangibles, such as a “small town feel,” “progressive attitudes,” and a sense of being a “caring community.”

No doubt about it, Tempe is changing. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but we should be forward-looking enough to recognize the changes we are making to the community will have consequences—both intended and unintended, both positive and negative. As we move forward, let’s be careful not to forget about Tempe’s past and present, the people who literally built Tempe, giving it the spirit and feel that makes Tempe not just any place, but a place we are proud to call home.

We all know that people have many choices as to where to live in this vast Valley, let’s hope that when they choose Tempe, it’s as much for the sense of who we are as a community (our values and our compassion for those in need) as for the views of Tempe Town Lake.

Sincerely yours,

Katherine Hanley

PROGRESS IN PLANNING

The Task Force on Aging Revisited

As the saying goes, “Time stops for no man” or woman. As time passes and Tempe’s population continues to get older along with the aging of the baby boomers, it becomes increasingly vital to be prepared for the changing needs of this population. The volunteer citizen-based Task Force on Aging studied the future needs and expectations of this changing demographic and presented their findings and recommendations in a comprehensive report to the Tempe City Council in 2002.

So, where are we now? What progress has been made in carrying out the Task Force recommendations?

Facing Difficult Economic Times

The Task Force report was finalized about one year after the fateful events of “9-11”. The City and its

economy were struggling then to recover from the aftermath – and still are. Tempe had to cut \$10 million from its budget in 2003-04 and there were no new city resources to be allocated to implement the recommended actions of the Task Force.

Help from the Private Sector

The Virginia G. Piper Trust launched a new senior-related initiative in 2003 in which Tempe has been fortunate to participate. Their **Life Options** initiative funded the **Tempe Connections** program in Tempe which has much relation to the ideas of the Tempe Task Force on Aging.

What is Life Options?

The Life Options concept addresses “engagement in rewarding and productive activities.” The Virginia G. Piper Trust has awarded planning grants for *Life Options Centers* “designed to link seniors with options – for education, for meaningful volunteer opportunities, for paid employment, for wellness activities, and for socialization. This place may be a library, a community center, a

PROGRESS IN PLANNING

church, a community college, a senior center or other community space.”

The Piper Trust envisions *Life Option Centers* to be gathering places that will promote friendships, social connections and community, as well as centers of information gathering, about a myriad of topics relevant to the lives of older individuals.

What is Tempe Connections?

Tempe Connections was funded in the amount of \$547,644 over three years from a grant from the Virginia G. Piper Trust. The program is targeted toward “Baby Boomers,” nearing retirement age.

Located within the Tempe Public Library and operated as a program of the “Friends of the Library,” Tempe Connections will include a café, with attached programming space that will serve as a social hub for meeting friends, engaging in lively discussions, viewing art displays, listening to music on the outdoor patio, attending lectures, seeking out volunteering opportunities and much more. Construction of the Connections Café is now underway, and it is scheduled for completion by January, 2006.

The following programming opportunities and workshops will be included:

- **Lifelong Learning and New Career Options**

- **Life Planning** (health care and financial planning)
- **Civic Engagement** (volunteer opportunities, mentoring programs, boards and commissions)
- **Information and Resource Navigation** (computer and website information, fitness opportunities, transportation assistance)

Many public and private partners will participate, including: ASU; AZ Women in Education and Employment; Arizona Saves; Changing Hands Bookstore; City of Tempe; Maricopa Association of Governments; Mesa Community College; Southwest Institute of Healing Arts; Tempe Chamber of Commerce; St. Joseph’s Hospital; Tempe Community Action Agency; and Tempe Community Council.

How does Tempe Connections relate to the Tempe Task Force on Aging?

Members of the Tempe Task Force on Aging, as well as staff to the Task Force, served on the Tempe Connections Planning Committee, ensuring that recommendations from the Task Force Report were incorporated into the Connections programming plan. While much remains to be done, Tempe Connections is a significant and exciting step forward toward fully implementing the recommendations. It will be a wonderful resource for Tempe’s increasing aging population.

Tempe Hires it’s First Accessibility Specialist

The final report of the Task Force on Disability Issues was accepted by the Tempe City Council in December, 2004. This report was the result of several months of study by a dedicated committee of Tempe citizens. One of the priority recommendations of the Report was to hire an Accessibility Specialist for the City of Tempe. The Mayor’s Commission on Disability Concerns has also advocated for the creation of this position for many years.

We are pleased to be able to report that Cindy Brown began employment in the City Diversity Department on June 20th as the City’s ADA Accessibility Specialist. Ms. Brown brings over six years of professional experience with ADA issues to this position. She has served as the statewide coordinator for ARTability and, most recently, has worked as a Training and Programs Development Coordinator for the Arizona Office for Americans with Disabilities. She was also awarded the 2004 Phoenix Mayor’s Award from the Mayor’s Commission on Disability Issues.

As Tempe’s ADA Accessibility Specialist, Ms. Brown’s duties will include: acting as a single point of contact for other City departments, outside agencies and the general public regarding disability issues; providing technical assistance to design professionals, coordinating disability compliance trainings and

AGENCY REVIEW — AN UPDATE

Tempe City Council Approves Human Service Funding Recommendations

In June, the Tempe City Council gave final approval to the human service non-profit agencies that will receive funding in FY 2005-2006. This year, over \$1.1 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, General Revenue funds, and Help to Others (H2O) donations were allocated to 36 agencies that provide vital services to Tempe residents in need. The allocation of funds (known as the Agency Review process) is determined by a 50-member citizen volunteer committee who make the funding recommendation to the City Council. With the support of Tempe Community Council (TCC), this volunteer committee donated over 1,000 hours of service by reviewing applications, conducting interviews, and making funding recommendations. Of the total allocation, 58% of funds went to Basic Needs Programs (ex: Food, Shelter Services, Homeless Prevention), 33% of funds went to Family & Individual Support (ex: Counseling, Housing, Recreation, Child Care, Youth Service, Senior Service), 8% of funds went to Collective Safety (ex: Domestic Violence, Legal Service, Crisis Services), and 1% of funds went to Service Support (ex: Volunteer Support). To learn more about the funded agencies, to volunteer on the Agency Review Committee, or to learn more about TCC, please visit www.tempe.gov/tcc or call 480-858-2300.

The agencies to the right were funded for Fiscal Year 2005/2006.

Advocates for the Disabled
 ARC of Tempe
 Area Agency on Aging
 Association for Supportive Child Care
 AZ Action for Foster Children
 Body Positive, Inc.
 Boys & Girls Club of the East Valley
 Central Arizona Shelter Services (CASS)
 Child Crisis Center
 Chrysalis Center
 City of Tempe — Family Self Sufficiency
 Community Bridges
 Community Legal Services
 East Valley Catholic Social Services
 Mesa Senior Services
 EMPACT/Suicide Prevention Center
 HomeBase Youth Services
 Homeward Bound
 Mesa Community Action Network
 NewTown CDC/CLT
 Open Horizons
 Phoenix Shanti Group
 Planned Parenthood
 Prehab of Arizona
 Tempe Salvation Army
 Save the Family
 Shared Living Village
 Sojourner Center
 The Centers for Habilitation (TCH)
 Tempe Community Action Agency (TCAA)
 Tempe/Kyrene Communities in Schools (CIS)
 Thomas J. Pappas Elementary School
 Tumbleweed Center for Youth Development
 United Food Bank
 Valley Center of the Deaf
 YWCA

Don Carlos Humanitarian Award and Hayden Youth and Young Adult Award

Don't forget to mark **Wednesday, November 2 at 5:00 p.m.** on your calendar for the presentation of the Don Carlos Humanitarian Award, honoring a special individual or couple who, through their dedication to community and service, have made Tempe the caring community that it is today. Tempe's future humanitarians will also be honored as well with the presentation of the Hayden Youth and Young Adult Award.

Again, this special occasion will be held at the newly-renovated Arizona Historical Society Museum, 1300 North College Avenue, Tempe. We are grateful to Heidi's Events & Catering who are generously donating the wonderful food for this event.

WE THANK YOU...

Community is the essence of TCC, and we would not exist without the generous community of Tempe in which we operate. Be it a volunteer opportunity, a facility to host an event, or food for a hundred people, our generous partners help make our events and programs possible.

Donations from Cox Rebate

Last May, many Tempe residents received a letter from Cox Communications explaining that an agreement had been reached between Cox and the City of Tempe over the collection of city sales tax within local cable bills. The result of this agreement was a cash rebate of the collected city sales tax that could be directly given back to Cox customers. Along with this direct rebate, customers were given another option: to donate their rebate to the Tempe Help to Others (H2O) fund. One hundred percent of every dollar donated to the H2O fund goes directly to help people in need in the Tempe community. We at TCC appreciate all of the people who are responsible for providing this generous donation option to Cox customers, with special thanks going to Cox Communications and the City of Tempe. We'd especially like to thank all of the many people who have chosen to donate their rebates to help people in need in Tempe. Your acts of kindness make a real difference in lives throughout our community. To learn more about Tempe's Help to Others (H2O) program and the great agencies that are receiving H2O funds, please visit www.tempe.gov/tcc.

FAREWELL TO A FAMILIAR FACE

After eight years of raising children in this community, Open Horizons Director Jennifer Johnson is taking her considerable talents and moving on to pursue new endeavors.

Jennifer's legacy at Open Horizons will span generations, as she helped dozens of teen parents complete their education and find services for their families, while creating a warm and supportive environment for the babies and toddlers who spent such important years under the care of Jennifer and the staff at Open Horizons.

Jennifer wore many hats on a day-to-day basis, as administrator, counselor, advocate, child care provider and friend to clients and staff alike. She helped establish and sustain many of the funding opportunities that are in place today to assure that the Open Horizons Program stays on solid ground for years to come. Open Horizons is a unique partnership between ASU, Tempe Elementary School District #3, the Tempe Union High School District and Tempe Community Council.

Through challenges and victories alike, Jennifer always had a smile on her face and a positive demeanor that was truly contagious. We wish Jennifer the best of luck as she moves forward to take on new and exciting opportunities...she will be missed!

Former Open Horizons Director Mary Zuzich and Lead Teacher Harveen Sethi will be assisting TCC through this transition in the Teen Parent Program.



SUMMER 2005 CALENDAR

July	August	September
4 4th of July (TCC Closed) 25 Don Carlos Humanitarian Award Nominations are Due. 26 TCC Executive Committee Meeting	3 TCC Board Meeting 23 CIS Board Meeting 24 East Valley Resource Committee (EVRC) Meeting (Mesa) 30 TCC Executive Committee Meeting 30 Don Carlos Selection Committee Meeting	5 Labor Day (TCC Closed) 7 TCC Board Meeting 26-28 Agency Review Bidders' Conference & Training (Tempe Public Library) 27 TCC Executive Committee Meeting 27 CIS Board Meeting 28 East Valley Resource Committee (EVRC) Meeting (Tempe)

For confirmation and further details of meetings and events listed above, please call (480) 858-2300



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